



WUR Goes Abroad

1. Student Information

Study programme WUR	Bachelor Environmental Sciences
Exchange semester (dd/mm/yyyy)	20/07/2023 until 14/12/2023
Exchange destination: University	Oregon State University
Faculty	College of Sciences
Country	United States of America
City	Corvallis

2. Motivation for exchange

Why did you choose to go on study exchange?

I wanted to know what it feels like to live in another country for a longer time and explore a different culture.

What is the reason you chose for this country/university?

I have always dreamt of going to the United States. I chose OSU as it had some good ranking in the world with the oceanography courses.

3. Accessibility to reach destination

Do you have any tips to reach your exchange destination?

Fly to Portland, Oregon and then take Groome transportation. That is a shuttle that drives to Corvallis and drops you off next to the uni.

4. University and studying

Could you provide some general information about the followed courses?

	Course	ECTS	Short description of the contents	Appreciation of course: 1(low) – 5(high)	Remarks
1	Energy Alternatives	4.5	How to change from fossil fuels to renewable energy. What different sources of energy are there and how can we use those?	5	Absolutely loved this course. Very inspiring and taught well.
2	Introduction to water science and policy	4.5	How is water regulated in the United States, who owns which rights, what organisations have something to say about the water, how water flows in the pacific northwest	3	Although it was very interesting to note the difference between how water is regulated in the Netherlands and in the States, I did not see the extra value in knowing which parties have what to say about the water use in the states.
3	Managing natural resources for the future	4.5	Consist of only guest lectures. They will explain various topics like the trophic cascade in the pacific northwest, the barred owl, indigenous tribes, etc	4	It did not have an exam but several papers. The topics were varying in interesting or not. Overall I did enjoy it as most of the topics were interesting and I liked writing the papers a lot more than having to study extra for another exam.
4	Principles of Physical oceanography	6	Goes in deep about oceans and how ocean currents work. Topics like turbulence, buoyancy, deep water circulation, eddies, upwelling and downwelling will be discussed in detail	5	Although it was a bit vague at some points, I absolutely loved it and it was very interesting!
5					
6					

What is it like to study there?

E.g. study forms, academic level, examination, workload, lesson material.

Academic level was lower than expected. Principles of physical oceanography was regarded as a course that is a bit above bachelor level and a bit below masters. However, it was more on the level what would be given in a bachelor at Wageningen University. Examination is nice as you will have a lot of assignments throughout the term which will cause the final to be only 20%-25% of the total grade. This takes away quite a bit of pressure. Workload is really different between courses, some courses will give you several deadlines a week while others just give you 2 paper deadlines for the

whole 10 weeks. Lesson materials were fine, some courses used a book while others used online material.

What is the culture of the university?

E.g. How approachable are the lecturers, engagement with local students? What are the differences with the WUR?

Lecturers are really approachable, even with questions not about their course. Some professors were interested that I was from the Netherlands and wanted to know more about how we take care of things over here. OSU does have quite big differences with WUR. OSU provides almost all studies. Not only environmental studies but also astrophysics, biomedical, computer sciences, etc. Because of that it was very nice to also integrate with people from a completely different background and studies. On academic level, WUR does surpass OSU. As WUR is really focussed on a few studies in the environmental, biological, etc field, the level of courses is a lot higher, although OSU is the 3th best in the world I believe on Oceanography. With differences between the campus. I loved the OSU campus. The buildings are a lot older and gave more of a welcome feeling than the WUR campus does. There were fireplaces, couches, pianos, etc. It was setup so nicely that I loved studying on campus while in Wageningen I normally study at home as I do not like the campus that much.

What does the university offer students additionally?

E.g. catering, sports facilities, laundry facilities?

The university offers quite a lot of events with free food. I had free pie with hot chocolate, free cookies during Halloween, free pizza because the astronomy department had a celebration, free pizza because it was World GIS day, etc. Beside that the university has a gym including, swimming pool, basketball courts, 2 level gym, an indoor athletics track, health food place, sauna, etc. This is all already paid for in your fees so it is sort of free to you. Beside that it offers quite a lot of other events which are for free or for a small contribution.

5. Housing-travelling-living

What are the possibilities for housing?

E.g. Availability to sign up for a room on campus, private rooms, rent rates?

On campus is quite expensive and you are obliged to have a meal plan which makes it even more expensive.

I would advise living off campus. I lived in the Ihouse which was amazing. Having a house with 62 other people from different nationalities (ihouse stands for international house) is amazing. Ofcourse the house also contains Americans but I have made friends who are from Brazil, Mexico, Canada, India, etc. I loved living there however I would not advise signing up for a 4 person room as sometimes you really need a space for yourself and you cannot have that in such a big house. Ihouse 4 person room was 525,- per month including heat, electricity, water, etc. just not laundry.

I also knew some people who lived off campus in student houses. This is a bit more expensive and some houses do include all utilities and others don't.

What is the culture of the country like?

E.g. Differences with home, local cuisine, habits, manners?

Not a lot different from the Netherlands. I did notice we are a bit more hard working and tough when it comes to being sick (Americans like to call in sick when they feel a little bit off). But not large differences. Oregon is also one of the more sporty and healthy states which you see back in what people like to do. It is not like the stereotypical American.

Could you give some information about public transport infrastructure?

E.g. Cost public transport card, taxi prices, how to travel to the university?)

All of public transport in Corvallis is for free. On campus and throughout the city, you do not have to pay. I used the bus once and it was good. There are a few options from Corvallis to travel to other nearby cities. These cost a small amount of about 5-10 dollar per ride. For example you could take the bus to Newport (coastal town an hour away, very beautiful and good food) and it would cost you 5,-. Beside those few towns the public transport is very bad. There is a train which can take you to some places but is not very reliable and takes a long time. The groome transport shuttle will take you to Portland, Albany, Salem and Eugene. Those are all cities on the I5 (road). However if you want to explore beyond the cascades you will need a car or to drive with someone who has a car. I had a lot of friends with cars so we did some trips to cities further away (Bend, amazing city, beautiful hiking or other sports). Corvallis is also a little bit more developed in biking than most American cities, so I used the bike mostly.

6. Expenses

Can you give an indication of your expenses for/during your exchange?

E.g. you can also indicate price differences (higher/lower/equal) in comparison to the Netherlands. (it is in euro's)

Ticket there: 890,-

Visa if applicable: 375,- (sevis fee + Ambassy fee)

Vaccinations if applicable: 75,-

Insurances (extra, if applicable): 1410,- (mandatory health insurance at OSU)

Housing costs per month & type of housing/accommodation: 525,-

Groceries: 850,- (for 3 months), a lot more expensive than in the Netherlands

Public transport: 100,-

Restaurant/going out for dinner: 300,-

Daytrips/sight-seeing: 350,-

Additional remarks regarding expenses?

I spend a lot of money on gifts for people at home and when to restaurants often, you could really save money on this. Also find a good mobile phone plan that does not cost you 100,- for 3 months. It can be way cheaper than that.

7. Free time

What are must-sees in the area?

E.g. nearby destinations, how do you prefer to travel, when to plan?

Bend (winter snowboarding, summer hiking/rafting etc), Newport (best in summer), Marys Peak (beautiful night skies), Deschutes National Park, Smith Rock

What does not appear in a travel guide, but is definitely worth a visit?

I wanted to go snowboarding at Mt Bachelor or Mt Hood but sadly there was not enough snow in the weekends to go. I also wanted to go to Burns and Hines to visit the Mustang Holding Facility but sadly had to cancel that too.

Oregon holds a lot of beautiful hikes. Eugene has some hot springs you could hike to.

Do you have general tips and tricks about leisure time?

E.g. recommendations for restaurants, going out?

I loved going on runs and hikes there. The parting and going out isn't that large in Corvallis. You will need to go to house parties to experience those. Ihouse is known for its house parties and those were pretty cool.

8. Challenges & best moment abroad

What challenges did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

Time difference. You will have 9 hours of time difference. This will cause you to only have time to call/text with family and friends from the Netherlands in the morning until 1 pm. After that a lot of them go to bed or don't pick up their phone anymore. This was weird at some times but it was also funny to think I was going about my day and they were asleep on the other side of the world.

What is your best memory of your time abroad?

Getting to know so many amazing people and having some crazy adventures with them.

9. Contact details (optional)

Is the reader allowed to contact the writer?	yes <input type="checkbox"/>	no <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Name/e-mail		